

PREFACE.

This volume is chiefly composed of acts of the Provincial Assembly of Maryland, which have never previously been printed, although the Proceedings of the Assembly for the years covered have already appeared in the Archives. There were two gaps in the Session Laws available to students until last year, including some of the Laws passed from 1694 to 1699 and some of those passed from 1714 to 1729. The story of the recovery of the original manuscript of the volumes containing the acts of the later period is told in the preface to volume 37 of the Archives. The acts here printed from 1694 to 1698 were copied for the state, under the supervision of George J. Dowse, Esq., of the firm of Edward G. Allen & Son, in London, and are taken from a volume found among the manuscripts relating to American Colonial History in the British Public Record Office. Liber LL, 2, in the Maryland Manuscript Archives, contains the public acts passed from 1694 to 1698, which were in force in 1699, and the volume was probably copied about the latter date. The original manuscript session laws of that period had been lost before 1765, so that Rev. Thomas Bacon could not refer to them in his compilation of Maryland Laws. During the most of the Provincial portion of Maryland History, a duplicate of the laws passed by the General Assembly was sent over to the Lord Proprietary for his approval. In 1692, however, the control and administration of the Province was taken out of his hands by the Crown, and was not restored to him until 1714. During the period from 1694 to 1698, therefore, the duplicate copy of these laws was placed in the records of the English Government. The thought occurred to me that these laws might be found there, and an examination of Professor Charles M. Andrews' "Guide to Material for American History in the Public Record Office" showed an entry which seemed to cover the lost statutes. Correspondence was begun, the lacking titles of the laws were identified, and the material copied from this repository comprises the first part of this book.

Obviously, laws of the character of those printed in this volume are not of the highest importance, yet they should be printed in order to make a complete *Corpus Juris Provinciale Marylandicum*. We now have printed in the Archives practically *all* the acts of the Provincial Assemblies down to 1732, and this is no small matter. Furthermore, the historian finds the records of unsuccessful